

REMARKS

Applicants have cancelled Claims 1-18, and have added new Claims 19-31. The pending claims are believed allowable for the reasons given below.

The present invention is a tip for a caulking gun, the tip having a guide that enables the user to hold the tip against an elongated object, such as a base board, while moving the tip along that object. The invention greatly facilitates the application of adhesive to a base board or similar structure.

The invention can be realized in two primary ways. First, the tip can have guides at both edges, the guides being oriented in mutually opposite directions, as illustrated, for example, in Figures 1 and 2. Secondly, the specification states, beginning at page 9, line 26, that the tip may have only one guide, located at only one edge. In either case, only one guide is used at one time. If the tip has two guides, one guide performs no function while the other guide is engaged with the base board. The reason for having two guides is to make it practical to reverse the orientation of the tip, while still having a guide available to engage the base board.

Most of the original claims, including Claim 1, covered both of the above embodiments. In the new set of claims presented herein, Applicants have claimed these embodiments separately. Because some of the claims now recite the case where there is exactly one guide, and exclude the case of two guides, Applicants have added new Figure 6, and have amended the specification to refer to new Figure 6. These amendments introduce no new matter, because the specification clearly states that only one guide could be used, i.e. that one of the two guides could be omitted. Figure 6 simply

reproduces a portion of Figure 1, with one of the guides omitted.

Applicants therefore request approval of the new figure. If required, Applicants can supply a more formal version of new Figure 6.

New Claims 19-21, 25, 27, 29 pertain to the case in which there is one, and only one, guide. New Claims 22-24, 26, 28, 30, and 31 pertain to the case in which there are two guides. These groups of claims are discussed separately, below.

Claim 19 recites that the tip has a guide located at only one of the edges of the tip, and wherein the other edge is free of any guide. This recitation clearly excludes what is shown in Lavoie. To the extent that any piece of the fantail section 46 of Lavoie could be identified as a "guide", such guide is clearly provided on both edges of the tip.

Thus, the device of Lavoie does not perform the function performed by the present invention, and does not have the advantages of the invention.

Moreover, Claim 19 has been written so as to exclude the possibility of identifying the thickness of the tip of Lavoie with the width of the tip of the present invention. To avoid any ambiguity, Claim 19 recites that the outlet portion has upper and lower surfaces that are spaced apart to define a thickness, and a pair of lateral edges defining a width of the outlet portion. The claim recites that the width is greater than the thickness. Thus, the claim requires that the sole guide be located at one edge of the long dimension of the tip. This feature is clearly absent from Lavoie, and Lavoie provides no suggestion thereof.

The patent to Chao clearly shows a symmetrical structure, as shown in Figure 3, with "guides" 5 located near both lateral edges. Thus, Chao clearly does not meet the limitations of Claim 19.

Applicants therefore submit that Claim 19, and Claims 20 and 21, which depend from Claim 19, are allowable. A similar argument applies to Claims

25, 27, and 29, all of which contain similar limitations. All of these claims require the presence of one, and only one, guide, located at a lateral edge of the tip. And in all of these claims, the term "lateral edge" is defined to mean the edge of the long dimension.

Claim 22 pertains to the case in which there are two guides, disposed at both lateral edges of the tip, and extending in mutually opposite directions, as shown, for example, in Figures 1 and 2.

The term "mutually opposite directions" is defined precisely by Claim 22. In particular, there are first and second guides, the first guide extending above the upper surface and not extending below the lower surface, and the second guide extending below the lower surface and not extending above the upper surface. This relationship is clearly shown in the figures.

The Examiner has held that Chao shows "mutually opposite directions". But the new claim language described above specifically excludes Chao. Chao shows a symmetric structure in which the "guides" 5 extend both above and below both surfaces of the outlet portion. The language of Claim 22 requires that one guide point in one direction, and that the other guide point in the opposite direction.

The above feature is not shown or suggested by Chao, or by any of the other references. As explained above, this feature confers a special advantage, namely that the tip of the present invention can be used in either orientation, with one guide engaging the base board and the other guide not being used. Thus, the caulking gun using the tip of the present invention can be applied to the base board without regard to orientation. Chao suggests none of the above features or advantages.

Applicants therefore submit that Claim 22 is allowable. Claims 23 and 24, which depend from Claim 22, are also believed allowable.

Claims 26, 28, 30, and 31 contain limitations similar to those discussed with respect to Claim 22, and are therefore also believed allowable for the same reasons.

Applicants have considered the other references cited by the Examiner but not applied to the claims. None of these references is believed relevant to the patentability of the pending claims.

Applicants therefore submit that all of the new claims are patentable over the references. Applicants request reconsideration by the Examiner, and early favorable action.